VISUALIZING YOUR PATH

DESCRIPTION

The second step is to visualize the entirety of your program or project from where you are now to where you want to go. A common way to do this is to represent your program or project as a logic model. Logic models are easy to use and provide a clear roadmap for success.

LOGIC MODEL

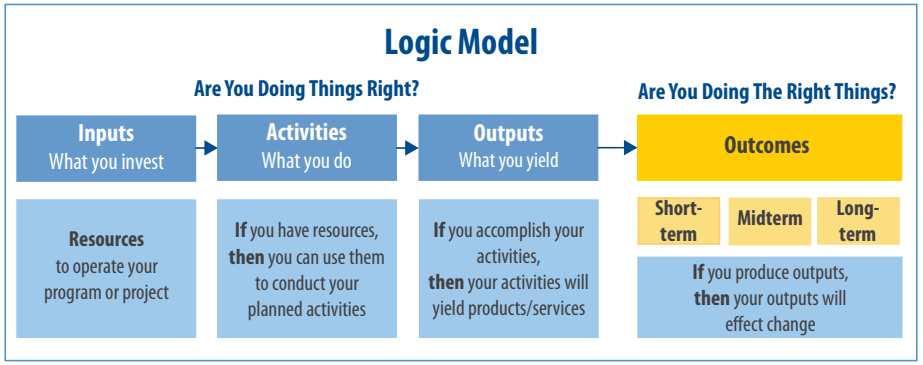
A logic model visually represents the connections between what you invest, what you do and what you achieve.

The four components of a logic model are:

1. **Inputs**: available resources such as funding, staff time and other assets you have to conduct the activities related to your program or project.
2. **Activities**: actions your program or project take to achieve a particular result.
3. **Outputs**: what your activities will yield, such as number of workshops, number of clients served or number of contacts made. Outputs set the stage for your outcomes.
4. **Outcomes**: changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, behaviour or conditions that show progress toward achieving your project's ultimate outcome or the why you undertake your activities.

"READING" A LOGIC MODEL

An easy way to "read" a logic model and the connections between its components is with a series of "if and then" statements.



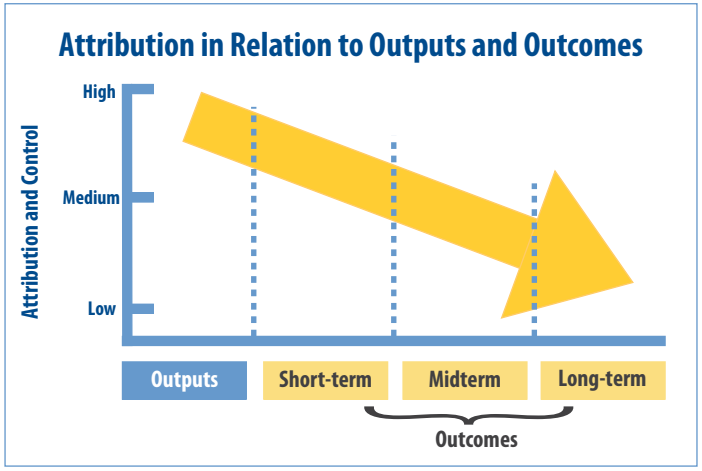
VISUALIZING YOUR PATH

ATTRIBUTION ISSUE

Inputs, activities and outputs are relatively straightforward to determine; however, outcomes - the core of a logic model - require a bit more consideration. While you have already determined your ultimate outcome, it's difficult to measure on its own. This is because outcomes are, by design, both broad and influenced by a variety of factors. This is known as the attribution issue.

Attribution refers to the ability to relate an outcome to an activity. It is more difficult to attribute the longer-term outcomes to an activity because of external forces that may be beyond the control of your community, such as economic cycles, market demand fluctuation, exchange rates, trade policies and global supply chains.

This is why looking at the short-term and midterm outcomes is one of the most important steps in the performance measurement process. These outcomes have a higher attribution to your work, but together lead towards your ultimate outcome.



PROCESS

1. Return to your **Excel Workbook**, and open the tab: **Logic Model.**
2. You will notice that inputs, activities and ultimate outcome have already been populated based on your work in the **About You - Inventory** tab.
3. Begin with determining the outputs related to your activities. Remember these outputs are the direct results of an activity, and tend to have a number relating to frequency and/or intensity of the activity. They do not assess if or how the activity has been successful, just what it will yield.
4. Next, determine the short-term outcomes that follow from your outputs or the execution of the activity. Capture the changes that occur in the level of participation, capacity, awareness, skills, knowledge, access or partner support as a result of the output.
5. Finally, determine the midterm outcomes. Capture the changes in perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour among people and groups affected by your program or project.

VISUALIZING YOUR PATH

TIPS

- Always remember to stay SMART in describing your outcomes.

  SMART goal-setting is:

  Specific: identifies what will be accomplished

  Measurable: ensures that change can be tracked

  Achievable: is supported by the available resources

  Relevant: relates to community needs and overall vision

  Time-bound: should be grounded by the plan's timeframe

- Consider an alternate style for your logic model which you can find in the **Alternate Logic Model** tab of your **Excel Workbook.**
- For more complex programs, add a column for long-term outcomes. This step between midterm and ultimate outcomes can consider higher-level changes that may occur such as social, political, economic, technological or environmental.
- Keep the process simple – a fairly simple visualization will help clarify what needs to be measured.

NEXT STEP

Now that you have a draft of your logic model, your outputs and outcomes will inform the next step: **Choosing Indicators**.